

## FILM ANALYSIS: "THE FOG OF WAR"

Developing an understanding of social structure in general, and the complex inter-relationships between the people that comprise the structure, is a very complex process. Even more difficult is developing an understanding of the relationships that exist between people caught up in the very complex processes of war. The rationalizations and motivations of individuals, of powerful leaders, and of the forces of agency that underlie warfare are difficult to identify for many reasons. And, once set in motion, the impact of the acts of war that are perpetrated on the social structure are frequently understood not as they are committed, but only in the context of their historical impact. In short, developing any sociologically sound understanding of war is difficult, and not one that can be arrived at through answering a few simple objective questions.

However, developing a sociological imagination that will lead to at least some level of understanding is the purpose of any sociology class. The following two questions require short, concise essay responses, built on sociological theory. Take care to assure that your responses are not built around personal or emotionally based opinion, but are, instead, grounded as much as possible in verifiable data. And, be sure that the sociological basis for response is readily visible through the use of sociological terms and theoretical references.

1) Responding to this question requires that you be familiar with "Lesson 6: Get the Data."

Based on revelations over the past four decades it has become clear that powerful men made poorly informed decisions during the Cuban missile crisis of the Kennedy administration as well as leading up to and during the Vietnam War. Considering the current war in Iraq, answer the following question:

Which sociological theory would you use to explain what appears to have been a near intentional blindness to some data while adopting other data as justification for the war; explain and defend your choice of theory?

2) Responding to this question requires that you be familiar with "Lesson 8: Be prepared to re-examine your reasoning."

Based on current revelations of our government's acceptance and utilization of seriously flawed data as the primary justification for the current war in Iraq, develop an alternative plan, built on sociological theory, through which our position and policy might have been altered to accomplish a long term, functionally satisfactory outcome to the war?